

Joe: Could you tell me who you are and where you were born and when you were born?

Victor: I'm George Victor Wilkins. Born in Peoa, Summit County, Utah on Oct. 22, 1902 of goodly parents.

Joe: Who were your parents.

Victor: George Edgar Wilkins, father and Zina E. Miles, mother. They were sealed in the Salt Lake Temple, married in there so I was born under the covenant. We lived there 'til we moved out here in 1908, the spring of 1908. But in the fall of 1907, we came out here, my father and two teams, and worked on the canal that goes to Ouray Valley, camped over there on the Sand Ridge. We was there about six weeks, then we went back to Peoa where we stayed the winter, then came here in the spring of 1908. Moved out here, lived in a house owned by John M. Davis.

Joe: Was that on South Vernal Avenue?

Victor: South Vernal Avenue about a mile out of town where we lived for several years, and I went to school from there, walked from there to the Vernal Central School.

Joe: That was about a mile walk from where...

Victor: Yes, about a mile walk from our home to school and back. We were holding church then in the school house, Vernal Second Ward. We used to come there for church, Sunday School, Priesthood Meeting, and Sacrament Meeting.

Joe: And had a break between...

Victor: Yes, we had quite a break in them days. They had Priesthood Meeting in the morning, then Sunday School at about 10:30, lasted 'til 12, then we went home for dinner, lunch, came back at 2 to 4 when they held Sacrament Meeting, generally two hours was what they held it then.

Joe: Was this arrangement between the school district and the church, they permitted the church to...

Victor: Yes, they permitted. When the two wards were divided, why the Second Ward met in the Central School with an agreement with the school board and the church, we used it on Sunday and went to school five days out of the week.

Joe: Do you remember any of your school teachers back at that time?

Victor: What was Mrs. Richardson's name, used to teach school, do you remember that, Joe? Charlie Colton was a school teacher there.

Joe: Mrs. Woods taught a long time. Charlie Lewis was another one.

Victor: I think that was a little before Charlie's time, there, when I first started out. Charlie Colton was the principal, I think, at that time. There was eight rooms there. When we went to school to use the first four rooms, we used the down floor, lower floor, the last four years of public school, we met in the upper

four. When the bell would ring, we used to meet and form a line on the three doors, one east, one north, and one south and we'd march in there, the different classes and the different lines we had outside and march in and go up into the school where they had the desks and the different rooms.

Joe: At that time they had a big heater in each room, did they not?

Victor: Yes, we had a heater in each room and they used to have one in the hallway downstairs that they made a fire in the winter, it was cold, but they heated pretty good, we was kind of used to it in those days, so it wasn't too bad, but it was a nice building, brick building and it was a nice place to go to school and hold our services there too. The upstairs had a sliding door that went up into the ceiling, and they'd open that up when they'd have church or Sunday School to make two large rooms up there, they come together.

Joe: Sacrament Meeting and Sunday School.

Victor: Yes, we'd hold Sunday School meeting in those by putting those petitions, took them by hand and pushed them up and then brought them down so it made it pretty nice. We were instructed not to monkey with the desks or anything that was in them that would interfere with the schooling, the church was supposed to watch that and we were to take care of it. Of course we didn't have much vandalism in them days, and there were no trouble in that way. We were all pretty well LDS so we had no question on religion much in them days.

Joe: Can you remember a custodian at that time? You remember Mr. and Mrs. Robinson. They'd try to cross the street here, they were the grandparents of the Marshalls, Victor Marshall.

Victor: Yes, I remember them. He was a custodian, was he, then.

Joe: Yes, do you remember, he was the one that rang the bell.

Victor: Yes, that's right, I remember that.

Joe: They'd ring it a half hour before school was to start, we could hear it clear down to our place.

Victor: Yes, it rang all over the valley pretty well. We could hear it, we'd listen for it so we knew about how much time we had to get before school started, or church on Sunday, either, we kind of used it to let people know.

Joe: After you completed grade school, did you go to high school?

Victor: Yes, I went up to the high school, the academy, Uintah Academy, isn't that what they called it, Joe? I went up there two years.

Joe: At this time, did your folks have a homestead down in Ouray Valley?

Victor: Yes, they had that. Father came out in 1907 in the spring and filed on a desert entry. In those days they had desert entries and a homestead, too. That, as I remember, was about the last year that they had desert entry. He took up 160 acres in Ouray Valley as a desert entry. We was supposed to do so much work on it in order to prove up on it. That was one reason of coming out in the fall of 1907 and working on the Ouray Valley Canal was to help get the water, it came out of White Rocks and down through Lapoint and on the Sand Ridge and into Ouray Valley. Your folks was there too. James E. Hansen, old Jim Hansen, you remember him? He was ward clerk. He had 160 acres down there and

several more here had different.

Joe: Orson B. Calder.

Victor: Orson B. Calder was another one that was down there, a very influential man, well-liked in the community.

Joe: Hyrum had a...

Victor: Did Hyrum have one down there too?

Joe: Yes, he had his was north of Orson's, and was next to where Pelican, where the highway runs.

Victor: Yes, I remember that when the Pelican Lake down there. At that time there wasn't any water in the Pelican Lake, that was before they started to keep water. We used to run our cows down on the summer, let them go down in that lake bottom and that's where they summered there.

Joe: Was your homestead about 1/2 mile east of where the highway runs now?

Victor: Yes a mile east of there, I believe, Joe, of where the highway is now. Durfey's had 160 acres north of us, then Jim Hansen had that, was that his name, the old man that used to play the violin, you remember? Bald headed, he was stake clerk here.

Joe: His whole family were musicians, weren't they.

Victor: Pete Hansen was his name, wasn't it?

Joe: Pete Hansen.

Victor: That's right.

Joe: I think he might have been the county clerk at one time also.

Victor: Yes, he was, I remember being county clerk.

Joe: Then there was Jenny Hansen and Norman Olson's wife was a daughter.

Victor: Yes, she was a sister, Pete Hansen's daughter. She played the violin, they were a musical family.

Joe: Can you remember when the Norman Olson family would come and play for Sunday School for a 1/2 hour before...

Victor: Yes, I remember that.

Joe: After we moved in the new chapel, that was.

Victor: After they built the chapel. Yes, I remember that. They weren't here when we first came here, were they Joe? They came later, the Olson family.

Joe: Yes. Now could you tell something about the building of the Second Ward Chapel on First West

and...

Victor: Where the Senior Citizen Center is now?

Joe: Yes.

Victor: Yes, that's when Father was bishop. That's after we had moved from John M. Davis' place out to a place we had bought two miles and a half south of town from Bartlett, George Bartlett, as I remember. Do you remember that?

Joe: Yes.

Victor: That made us have to come two miles and a half to church and to school. I rode a horse then in that way. After WWI they was quite a necessity to have a chapel, although they knew money was tight. But Enos Bennion and your dad, E.J. Winder, and H. Belcher and Hatches were great boosters, and the Ashtons, Les Ashton owned a hardware store. He was awful good to help. Of course we went on the mountain, they did, and got out the lumber. As I remember, it was sawed at Hick's Mill. We hauled it from there to the rim of the mountain where they transferred it onto sleighs. They hauled it there in the fall of the year, then the sleighs during the winter, we hauled it from there down here to the chapel. Lots of people took part in it, I was just a boy then when we hauled it from the top of the mountain down here, I drove one team, my dad used to tie a big pole or something behind the wagon or sleigh to hold it back. He used to use what they called a rough-block. A piece of chain to go around the runner on the sleighs to go down a steep hill. We came down off of there to Brush Creek to that cave over there where they had a little camp. They used to stay nights there. They'd get up in the morning and up there to the top of the mountain and get a sleigh-load of lumber and come down to this cave there in Brush Creek, and then we'd pull it from there to Vernal the next day. Then when it come to getting the rock, we used to get that up at the Mail Draw. That's east of Steinaker Draw. I drove a team there hauling rock along with my father, he had a team, we had two teams. I drove one, just a boy, and he drove the other one. We hauled rock to the Vernal Second Ward chapel. Then I helped haul some sand from Jensen. We had a few loads, we got most of the sand out here south of town out where the Orson B. Calder farm used to be out there, just about a mile south of there, there was asphaltum sand. They didn't like it too well, but it seems it stayed there over the years. We hauled some from there a time.

Joe: Got gravel out that way also.

Victor: Yes, we got gravel out there, gravel beds they found around there. We used to plow it with a team, then shovel it into a wagon. Some of us we had use just regular wagon bed that came with wagons, others had what we called lumber they'd made. They used to dump them by raising the sides up and shaking and turning the planks over. But when we used the regular wagon bed, we had to shovel it in and shovel it out. That's where we got the sand and gravel that went into that building.

Joe: Who was in charge of the construction?

Victor: The bishopric of the Second Ward was really the head of it, I believe, Joe, and they all worked together. If Swain's, as I remember, burnt some brick over there that went into it. They all just worked, of course the government then in the county as I remember at that time was mostly the Mormon church and men were elected but they were Mormons so we didn't have any outside help much only just the Mormon people banding together. Enos Bennion was quite a contributor. The Hatches contributed quite a little bit of money. Les Ashton, that's Low Ashton and Clair Ashton and Ray Ashton's father, run this hardware store. When they needed little things, door knobs or locks or different things that came out of the hardware store, they used to go there and get them. When they went to pay for them, he was very

good. He gave them lots and didn't charge them too much for what he did charge, but he was very influential and very helpful in building the Vernal Second Ward and those kind of men is what made it possible to build the Vernal Second Ward at the time they built it. The relief society, I remember them. Tom O'Neal, that's Rollin McNeill's father. He had a herd of sheep, I remember he was very, very good to give, too. Of course, H. Belcher worked in the bank as a cashier there in the Uintah State Bank, and that's how they got their money in donations from the relief society. I remember they went out and gleaned fields for wheat, and they raised that and sold it to put into to help build that chapel. They had quite a time, I remember, when they put the heating system in as they didn't have any modern engineers much, only just men like the bishopric and the stake presidents worked together and they figured out their heating system and the way they fixed them up so it made it pretty nice.

Joe: Do you remember the toad stools that they had in the chapel part there, little places where the heat came up.

Victor: Yes, I remember them. They had them there and they used them. They warmed the building at feet. We used to like to get around them with our feet when we'd come in in the wintertime from out the different farms out here where we lived. Vernal City wasn't too big at that time. People mostly lived on little farms out around here. John T. Pope was another man, as I remember quite well, that helped a lot. Fred G. Bingham, and we had quite a lot of people that helped that way to build the Vernal Second Ward. When they dedicated it, it was paid for.

Joe: Who came and dedicated it? I believe it was Heber J. Grant.

Victor: No, I believe it was George Albert Smith, as I remember, is that right?

Joe: I believe Heber J. Grant dedicated the First Ward Chapel when they built that.

Victor: It comes to my mind that it was...

Joe: Anyway, about the time that that was finished and dedicated, you got married, didn't you?

Victor: Yes, shortly after that I got married. I acquainted the Southams, were Mrs. Southam, Harry Southam's second wife was a Wardel. Her mother was a Wardel is the way it was, and they came from Peoa where we came from so we were acquainted with them after we got here, seemed like they came from the same place we did, we naturally got together. That's where I met my wife, Merle. We went together for two or three years there and then decided to get married. My father being bishop, he was very desirous that we be married in the temple. So we left here one day with a little chevrolet car that he had, the second one he owned. We drove to Helper where we got on the train that night and rode into Salt Lake. Went through the Salt Lake Temple the next morning, got out of there in the afternoon and came back to Helper where we stayed with my father's sister. She lived there, they worked in the mines at that time. We stayed there all night and came home the next day. I was very glad of that, I got a wonderful woman. She proved to be outstanding in every way. Was the one that stuck by me through thick and thin, raised her family, gave them the best she had and her husband, too. Was always a firm believer in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day-Saints, had a wonderful testimony of it. And Harry Southam did and his family, they came from Mormons. They started originally up in Wyoming. When they left Wyoming and came down to Uintah Basin here and settled down here on Ashley Creek, and he married a sister to Joseph P. Hacking and John S. Hacking and she lived about a year and a half after he married her and she died. Then he married Isabelle Herbert who was my wife's mother. They lived down in Naples and we were up here in Second Ward.

Joe: Tell a little about your experience in going on a mission for the church.

Victor: I had two daughters when I was called, my wife had a son in January after I left. I left to go on my mission in October, the latter part, and the arrangements were made that her and the two girls and the other one would live with the Southams and they would take care of them, and my father would take care of me on a mission. So that's the way I went was out there. When I got to the mission home, Don B. Colton was in charge, him and his wife of the mission home. I knew them well so the week we were there, at that time they gave us a week there to train us a little because we were from out here in the sticks and going east, why they figured we ought to know a few of the, how to be nice and so forth in eating and like that. Sister Colton, I remember, showed us how to use the different forks and knives, what they were for so if we invited to any homes, she showed us how to do that and gave us many other very valuable instructions. Don B. Colton and my father were very close, Father being bishop. Don B. used to be president of the stake before he was elected to go back to the Congress of the United States. When he left that, he came to Salt Lake and was head of the mission home there. Father always thought a lot of him, all the people did out here, thought a lot of Don B. Colton. He was a wonderful speaker and was a wonderful leader and he helped, as I remember, he was just about the first president that I got acquainted with, although I remember S.R. Bennion. An instance back there, they had a piano and my father bought it, wanted to learn music, but I never was very musically inclined and I didn't take advantage of it like I should have done. But on the mission field when I got out there they sent me to St. Louis Missouri to work in the Missouri district. There was about 30 missionaries there at that time. After I'd been there a year and a half, I was called to be district president, and at that time, they started to reorganize church to investigate the prophet Joseph and Hyrum and his wife. They put on what they called a spiritual revelation from the Lord where the bodies was, but it took them quite a while to find the bodies, but they found them while I was there on my missions. And President Bennion had me keep pretty close tab of it, it was in Hanibal, wasn't too far north of St. Louis, and he came over there several times. One time just before they found them, Pres. Heber J. Grant came through there on the train and stayed all night at the hotel and Pres. Bennion called me up the next morning at 5:00 and had me go down there and meet with them. We'd had a little polygamy trouble and they wondered how that was coming. I had breakfast with Pres. Grant and Pres. Bennion there in his room, had it served there, that's the first time I'd ever saw anything like that, that a hotel served a meal in a room, but they brought it in there. I was there about two hours and a half. Pres. Grant talking practically all the time. Pres. Bennion didn't say too much, but Pres. Grant was preaching the gospel to us and telling us different things, telling us things about polygamy and why it was abolished and was a very energetic, very nice man to listen to. They were very closely watching these graves in Hanibal, although Pres. Grant said they knew where they were buried all the time, but they didn't tell the Reorganites. Of course, when they found them, then more came out of the history. The finder of how they were buried said he told us there one instance. Before Joseph's wife died, Joseph Smith's wife, Emma Smith, she had them help her to the door of the Nauvoo house there and showed them where to go to dig her grave. When she died, they dug down, they hit a corner of a rough box so they knew that was in the right place, so they buried her by the side of her husband there when she died. So that's where they found them, the Reorganized Church. Pres. Bennion went up when they dug them up and he said there was no question but what that was them. He could see where the ball had hit Hyrum. He could see where that was so there was no question about that. Pres. Grant was keeping in touch with him. It was quite an experience to be there when that happened. I have those papers now that was wrote when they found those bodies and all about it.

Joe: After you returned from your first mission, is that about the time that you started in the trucking.

Victor: When I was here, after I came home in the spring of '28, I worked here farming, working for farmers around here, Lynn Ashton, worked for him a while and different ones. Then I decided that I would like to run a school bus, the school up here started to hire buses. I had a truck we'd bought there

and they wanted..., but before I bought it they had promised me the job. I went to the Uintah State Bank at that time to borrow the money and they let me have it to buy the truck if my father would sign with me, which he did. H. Walter Woolley was there at that time, that's how I got acquainted with him and J.K. Bullock, those kind of men who were the leaders here in this community. They loaned me the money to buy this truck and we built a box on the back of it and built a ladder affair that fastened onto the box down at the ground and a door in the building we built on it on the back of it there where they rode, we had it enclosed. Then we made some seats to go down each side and two down the center and we'd open that door from the outside and the kids would go in there, and I drove school bus there for three or four years. Then came the Depression when Roosevelt bought the cattle and destroyed some of them and hauled them to Salt Lake, why I started to use this bus then hauling those cattle and I bought another one, went back East to get the school buses, I took a contract from the school board, they bought Diamond T's and I took this Diamond T truck I had and took that box off from it and bought another one that I bought here to haul cattle with. Then I bought a school bus. Might be interesting to know that Fran Feltch and Tom Karren was running Utah Motor at that time and that's how I come to have a Diamond T truck, so they thought I could go back and get those three trucks...  
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...car and they'd taken the body that had been wore out. We fastened the body on this truck and I took three drivers and another man to drive my bus back and I drove the new truck back and we went to Richmond, Indiana where we got those buses. They were superior buses. Ray Reeder went with me, he was on the school board at that time. My cousin went, Alma Wilkins, with me. I forgot the man's name from over to Roosevelt, we took one of them over there, he went to drive his back. Then when we got there we just took the body off of the truck and put the school body on it, and got that arranged and they'd ordered the truck out of Chicago, Illinois, the Diamond T, I rode the train from Indiana there to get the truck and they met me in St. Louis and then we came on west with those buses. That's the first manufactured buses that we had here in Uintah County.

Joe: How were the roads at that time?

Victor: The roads were not too good, there were some paved and graded, but were mostly just dirt roads and we had to be pretty careful the way we went coming over the mountains, not to hit a storm or something that you couldn't come through. But they weren't too good of roads, they hadn't got to making the roads like we have today at that time.

Joe: Did you come back through Denver and Craig?

Victor: We came back to Denver and over the summit and into Steamboat Springs and Craig and into Vernal.

Joe: The roads were mostly gravel from Steamboat Springs this way.

Victor: Yes, mostly gravel and dirt. Quite a lot of dirt roads between Steamboat Springs and Vernal. That was about the time they started to haul gilsonite with trucks from the gilsonite mine to Artesia and then to Craig where they met the Moffatt road and unloaded the gilsonite onto there, so they kept the roads fairly good, but storms we had to watch out pretty close for.

Joe: Was that about 1935 or '36?

Victor: Right along in there, that's right.

Joe: A little later they started paving the roads between here and Craig, didn't they?

Victor: Yes, making them better. Different stretches was given. J.J. Stanton, he started to haul the gilsonite and he was quite influential in national and state government and got state help and like that to fix the roads, and they begin to improve them quite a bit. That's when I started to haul livestock was when Franklin D. Roosevelt bought those cattle and we hauled a lot of them to Salt Lake from here. After that there, there hadn't been many sheep move out of here, they used to trail some to Watson. They'd put them on the railroad to Watson, then they shipped them to Mack, Colorado where they had to transfer them from the narrow gauge onto the wide gauge railroad and from there to Denver or which ever way they went. I hauled a few that way, then Joseph Hacking and Philly Stringham and Bry Stringham called me in one day and wanted to know why we couldn't haul them from Diamond Mountain to Green River, that seemed to be the best market because that was the only Union Pacific over there. Then they could load them on the train and go to Denver or go into the Omaha or those markets there without having to transfer them and trail them to here. They had been trailing a few to Green River City, Wyoming then. But when you take a bunch of lambs off from ewes, they're awful hard to handle, off from their mothers, and they don't know what to do. They used to take a few old ewes along with them to try to trail them, but they had quite a loss. These three men, Philly Stringham and Joseph Hacking and Bry Stringham, they had quite foresight, they said they couldn't see why, the road wasn't too good, but they said we can be careful. So I started to haul them. We called in Walt Collier, he had a truck, and we talked to him and me and we said, well we'd try it. So the first we tried to haul was Philly Stringham and Joseph Hacking. Bry trailed his the first year, but we found out that worked pretty good. There was some loss on the trucks, cause we didn't know just how to petition them off in there, we just run them in there and they'd pile up going around them turns. So the second year, Clyde Eaton came in and he helped us with them. Then we got to putting petitions in, but that didn't seem to work too good. So then Ernest Caldwell in that year too, he had a truck and we decided to lay them down, which proved to be quite effective for that time, or we'd only haul about 75 of them to a truck. They would just use bob-tail trucks, 12 and 14 feet lengths, and we fixed decks so that they feed the two-by-fours on the side and decks through them and we'd pick them lambs up and lay them in there like you'd lay sardines in a can. Although they got quite dirty but yet our loss was very null. They couldn't get on one another, we had the decks low enough so they couldn't climb on one another and they'd just have to lay there, they'd try to get up, but they couldn't get up and they lay there. So that's the way we hauled them going to Green River. About the third year we started over there, we figured that out. Then they took to using it out of the Uintah Basin, other truckers had started up, started using the same thing, so for several years we laid them down. Then as we got larger trucks we decided to put petitions in a little closer, which we found worked pretty good, because that was awful hard work to lift them lambs into the truck and then lift them into the decks. We didn't know they'd run up a shoot. Then we learned that you could run them up a shoot and we could run them into the pens in the trucks so that worked good. Then we begin to get semis that were larger and we got to where we could haul 200 to a semi and by petitioning them off like that, our loss was very null, they never did have any trouble with the sheep men, they were always very cooperative and worked with us and helped us, and as far as one dying, they never paid any attention to it and we worked with them the same way. It was quite a thing going over the road over the mountain to Manilla then across that desert into Green River. When we first started to haul, it took Dick DeJournette and men like that up on the mountain, Harold Reeder, they didn't want to try it out. But after they saw the way it worked, and one time, before Ford DeJournette came in, he was about the last one to let us haul his. The fall before going over, he hit a storm over the other side of Manilla. The sheep scattered all over that country and down on the Green River and he had quite a time. He lost quite a lot of sheep, couldn't find them where they was, so he told me, "Well, you can figure on mine next year." So that made us so we were hauling all of them. We used to line them up, given them a day that we'd take them, and they'd work with us, if there was a storm, why they'd wait until the storm was over, then we'd start in hauling them again. Then they begin to buy them to go into the fields in Denver on the eastern slope, so then they



decided the roads was getting better to go to Craig than it was to go to Green River. They got this road fixed up, the gilsonite had been going, so then we started to haul sheep and cattle to Craig, connect with the Moffatt line there, and that proved to be very effective. That's the way it went the rest of the time that I was in the trucking business. Although we used to haul to Heber and we used to haul to Price, they received these lambs one time in Price a couple or three years after we started to haul them, but that was it. Walt Collier and myself hauled the first lambs that went from Diamond Mountain on a truck to Green River and we hauled, the rest of us, Ern Caldwell and Clyde Eaton and all of us together hauled the first lambs that went to Craig from up on Diamond Mountain. At first on Diamond Mountain when we went to Craig, we had them come down to Jensen and the CC's had built a corral there across the bridge and they used to bring their herds and come down there, we'd take the lambs out there and haul them to Craig. But as the fat market got a little better, they got so they wanted us to haul them off from the mountain so that they could get them there in a day, not to lose so much weight. So we started hauling them off of Diamond Mountain straight through to Craig. It took us a day to make the round-trip. That's the way we ended up getting them to Craig which was the best market we had, then they went into the fields in eastern slope on the wheat fields in the fall 'til they'd fatten up and then they'd put them on the market.

Joe: Along about this time, did you get into the bus transportation business too?

Victor: Yes. When I went and got these Diamond T buses for the school board and mine, that's when I started really in the bus business hauling school kids. Then Pres. Johnson and Bishops, they said, well why in the world couldn't you run a bus to Salt Lake. So we started to haul with a bus, they were superior buses, they weren't like the ones that we have now, but they were fairly nice buses, they were warm. It took us a little longer to go the Salt Lake with them, but we used to go out there first, we stayed all night and came back the next day. But then they decided by leaving early in the morning, we could go out and they could do a couple of sessions and then we could come back as it progressed. Then as the buses got better, we bought some 4104's that were manufactured by General Motors, which was a pretty nice bus. Then we got to running pretty good, they were faster than the older ones we had so that we made pretty good time going to Salt Lake there to the temple. We'd make those trips every day when they wanted to go with the stakes and the wards. You know how it's grown since to today. I was out there yesterday and back, we took out 47, 47 passenger bus. We left here at 12:00 was in Provo at 12:30, got in two sessions and back here 9:00 last night. So that's how it's improved. Now we have three of those buses we're running to the temple and running all over, charter buses. Then I might go back a little bit. I started trucking, of course my boys came along, as I came home, then Farron was born while I was gone. Then as he got big enough to work, he started helping me. We got a truck and he worked with me. As Wayne came along he started to work with me and as Clyde came along why he went in with me a little, and Edgar, the youngest boy, he went a little bit. But he afterwards changed and married a girl from Denver. They came here and bought a ranch out on Willow Creek, her father did, and that's where he met her, she went to school up here. Then he married her then he moved to Denver where he's lived ever since. But Farron has never worked for anybody else, only with me and then this business. When he was called to the army, Wayne was a little too young to go, but Farron went, I didn't think I could hang, but he encouraged me to hang on, so I stayed with it, and when he came back, why I said to him, "Well son, you've been gone now to the army, if you don't want to come back into this, why now would be a good time for you to think about it." He said, no, he said "I'd like to come back", and he said, "Let's make a company out of it." He said, "We'll work together," he said, "I think that's the best," he said, "I've seen all I want of the world and I'd rather come back." Wayne, of course, at that time he'd grown up a little bit. He helped me a lot, he drove when he was very young. He was only about 15 years old when Farron went into the army and I had to have a little help so I took him in and coming out of Heber one time, we'd took some livestock out there and the cops weren't too thick in them days, but this one stopped him. He'd left a little ahead of me and I was a little behind him, he said, "I didn't know who you was, you didn't look to me big enough to drive that truck." He said, "Who are you?" He told him that he was my boy, and he

said, "Well, I know Victor", by that time I got there and we talked it over and he said, "Well, he's pretty young," and I said, "Well, he's driving my outfit and he drove before with me." I used to always take them with me, they liked to go along and I liked to have them. That's been one of the greatest things in my life has been my family. My wife in back of me helped me all she could and my boys and my girls have all been the same way. They backed me up and worked with me. Wayne, he wanted to go on then driving as he grew up and as Farron came back from the army we got more of those bump-tail trucks that we're using, that's before we got the semis, and they started to drive. So then we got to where we were running three trucks. I driving one then Wayne driving one and Farron driving one. We worked together that way, and as we decided to make it a company, we first called it the Wilkins Trucking. Then we changed it to Wilkins Transportation. These two boys along with Clyde helped too. But as Clyde went to the army, and when he came back, he had quite a talent with electricity and TV's and radios was getting in there. So he got a little help from the government and went to school and learned the TV. Of course people in Vernal all know Clyde Wilkins and his experience with TV and they way he helped and worked with people and fixed them up and he got to where he was an awful good hand, and yet he never was where he couldn't help us. Any time we needed a little extra help why Clyde would come in and he'd drive and help us. As Edgar grew up, he was the same way. He went with us, taught him how drive wool, trucks loaded with wool, and he'd always go until he married this girl. Her father sold out on Willow Creek and went back to the carpenter business in Denver, he was a carpenter, so Edgar, he wanted to go there and kind of liked that. He didn't take too much to the trucking, although he was an awful good hand, and awful good driver. So he went to Denver and went into the home building there. Built a lot of homes in Denver and built until the depression kind of hit here a few years ago on the building. He got out with a little money, a hard worker, and he was always a worker. Had a good head on him and I had always taught my boys to try to stay within a boundary where they could pay out. Because nobody had ever given me anything, I had to get out and work it. I felt like that was a good thing to try to bring them up with the idea that we had to pay our bills. Although he was never turned down, shortly after I started in the trucking business, I changed from the Uintah State Bank and went over to the Bank of Vernal, N.J. Meagher, that's where my father dealt when he first come out here. John M. Davis and John H. Reeder were directors in the Bank of Vernal. My father dealt there when he first came. But he had H. Belcher, when he was called to be bishop, H. Belcher was a counselor and E.J. Winder. Two very wonderful men and three of them worked together here for 17 years in the bishop's business, but Brother Belcher was in the Uintah State Bank so he got us what little business we had in them days. We didn't have much. My father never made much money or any of the rest of these, although we always had plenty to eat and plenty to wear because my father paid an honest tithing, that's one thing he always done, he said, I owe the Lord and he always taught me the same thing, to pay an honest tithing. Because the Lord is the head of this thing, this is His religion, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day-Saints, has always been that way, and I've been taught that. After filling a mission my testimony grew and I knew this thing was true. My grandfather Wilkins landed in Peoa, Summit County, that's when he came across the desert, plains in the hand cart company, and he said, in coming across there, he used to take his shoes off and tie the laces together and pack them around his neck. I said, "Why did you do it?" He said, "Well, I knew this thing was true," and he said, "I didn't know whether I'd ever get another pair of shoes or not," and he said, "As I looked at those prairies we came across and the sage brush, I thought I better take care of them." I said "Well, have you ever been dissatisfied?" He said, "No, Victor, this thing is true, I know it, I knew it when I joined in England. I had a testimony that this gospel was true, and it's grown and grown as I came along." He came into Peoa and settled there where he started out as he got organized there. He was their first bishop for a long time in Peoa, then he was a patriarch. Then the Uintah Basin was throwed open when we came here and he decided he wanted to come out here. The stake president come to him there in Peoa and said, "Brother Wilkins, you're too old to go out there in that country to start over. You crossed the plains and come here and you better stay here." He said, "I told them no, I'm going to have a large posterity and I've got to have room for them to grow. So I'm going out in the Basin." "Well," the president said, "It would be all right for your family to go, but you better stay here." "No," he said, "I'm

going with my family." So he come out here. Father came here to Vernal, the rest of the Wilkins family had 13 children, he did, went up in the Mountain Home territory where he settled that. At one time, Mountain Home, Jim and his sons and daughters owned practically all the land around what they call Mountain Home, the different sections there that they took out under, that was homestead act that they took that out under. My grandmother Wilkins was quite a hand, she was a mid-wife. Brought a little over 300 babies into the world in that section and never lost a one. She felt like that was a wonderful record, and it was. Grandfather gave lots of patriarchal blessings, just to name one of them, I found here about a year ago, that he gave Acel Manwaring's wife her blessing. I didn't know that, but he gave a lot of blessings over there. When he died, President Smart talked to his funeral and he said, "This is one man that I can say has paid an honest tithing." That was a wonderful thing to me. But I'd learned this, that if a man like that would leave England as a boy, 14 years old and his mother, cross the plains and then in his testimony the last time he bore it to me, he said, "The gospel's true, Jesus is the Christ, Joseph Smith was a prophet of the living God." He said, "Victor, live the gospel, it's true. There's no question at all." My father lived the same kind of a testimony. Kine Hatch was talking to him over here one time, just a few years before he died and he said to Kine, he said, "Well," they were talking about the different things that happened over the years, when the flu was on here, the way they worked and like that and Kine was quite a hand. Kine didn't take too much interest in the church, he was a Latter-Day-Saint, but he was a helper. He said, "We used to dig the graves and we buried the dead and held the funerals when the flu was here," and they were talking there and Father said, "Well, Kine, you've got to get through the temple." Kine said, "You believe it don't you bishop?" He said, "Yes, I know it. If it wasn't true, I've wasted my life, but I'm satisfied with it because Kine, it's true, now you must get you and your wife through the temple." Kine and his wife went through the temple before he died. So that's the kind of training I was trained under. We never had tea nor coffee in our home, only when my grandmother Wilkins would come down, she drank a little tea. She liked a little green tea and we used to get a little when she'd come down to visit us. They'd only come about once every year because in them days we just traveled with horses, we didn't get around like we do now. We learned the Word of Wisdom and to pay our tithing and to live the gospel and that's what I learned on my mission was that thing. When they unearthed the prophet Joseph Smith's and Hyrum's and Emma's bodied and reburied them, the many things that happened strengthened my testimony all the way through. Now in these later years, my family working with me has been one of the greatest things in the world. I thought a lot about it and wondered if I'd done the right thing and yet one of my grandsons said the other day, "Grandpa, I'm going to try to get into business. I don't want to work for the other man, I don't know whether I'll have a job tomorrow or the next day." I said, "Well, son, that's why I've hung on to this business, I've had times that I could have sold it, but I've kept it because of my family, because the greatest thing in the world as I've said before is your family." And these here four boys of mine, I love them, they've stayed with me, we've been many a miles with these trucks but Wayne and me have done most of the driving in the later years, more than Farron. Because Farron when he was in the army learned to work on the Detroit Diesel in the navy, they had them, they called them the green marine, but they were the General Motors Diesel, and that's what we've always run is General Motors Trucks. We run the Diamond T for a while, but then they were a company that wasn't too well established, so I switched to General Motors and where I've been all the way through is with General Motors. When we were into the bus business, of course those buses are powered by Detroit Diesel. Well Farron understood them so he's always took the shoulder of the work here at home, we built garages and he's kept those outfits running when anything's wrong, just like day before yesterday, we found the bellows on one of them that was rusted out inside, we didn't know it and we had to have it fixed. Well, we went to Provo and got some parts we had from Utah Valley Transfer there, they work with us and are very good with us, we can get anything they got and they can get anything we got. We went out there and got those parts and brought them back yesterday on the bus that went to the temple and today is Friday and Farron is putting them in for that bus to go back to Provo tomorrow. So Farron has been, over the years, he's been the one that has took care of the garage business and kept them running and he's an awful good hand. The one thing I'd like to say about my boys. Over the years I've sent them long ways, Wayne

has drove buses from one ocean to the other ocean. Never no worry of drinking, never no worry of smoking, never no worry of them doing things they shouldn't, they never gambled, they have checkbook since we went in together and formed the company, they've wrote checks the same as I have. I'd like to say this, there I picked my boys in and we just split the money. When I turned it over to them a few years ago when we come to figure it up, we just figured thirds, the two boys took two thirds and I took a third and I don't think they owe me a thing because they've more than paid me. The confidence I've had in them and we could go to sleep at nights and not worrying whether they'd be drunk or anything like that, we knew they wasn't. People over the Basin we haul for, they all speak well of them, they say, "Brother Wilkins, your family, you don't need to worry about them boys." So I love them and I wouldn't take anything in the world for the experience I've had with my family. Now a few words about my good daughters. They're wonderful girls, Mertle, the oldest, Velda the second one, and Elaine the third one. They married good, the oldest one married Howard Walker out here and they've raised a good family. Velda married Alan Gentry out here, and they've raised a nice family. Elaine married Gene Hall up here, they've raised a nice family, didn't have any of their own, but they adopted three. And we love them three, and that's been a great instruments to us, the way they took them in and raised them, it's been worth a lot. It's like the girl they've got, they've got two boys and a girl, and the girl bore her testimony up here and thanked them and her Father in Heaven for the privilege of coming to a home where she was treated like that. She said they are Mother and Father and we love them. And they did, but my family are all of that order, they all love one another, we have a large family, we had seven children, we've got about 60 great-grandchildren now, no that's 35 great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren about 60. They multiply faster when they get up into the great-great than they do down here. They've always stuck with me, those girls have helped me, they went with me, they've helped load wool, they've helped load sheep, and their mother, been one of the greatest. I got a dandy woman and she's been a mother, she's made a home. These boys and girls as they've always had a home to come home to. She's never worked anywhere else, the Lord has been good to us. He's gave us the ability, I've never been sick to amount to a hill of beans, I've always been able to work and she's always been the same way. She always had a home, she had plenty to eat and they always liked to come home. As I meet people around here in the Basin that went to school with them, Roy Showalter's daughter said to me here a while back, "My we used to love to come down there and have hot bread and butter and honey to your home." Or they said, "Mrs. Wilkins was always there and we learned to love them." They had a lot of more friends and that's the way they've been. In working, they worked in the church, they lived their religion, and they're taking care of me now. Since the Lord's seen fit to take my wife and leave me here, why it's quite lonesome but I had her 64 years, that's a long while and she was always true blue. She always had a home and I knew that if I got home she'd be there and I knew she'd take care of them boys and girls, and she did.